

ANDORRA'S SKI RESORTS ARE INCREASINGLY INVESTING IN WHITE GOLD



Andorra, a small Pyrenean state, is a popular tourist destination that attracts around 9 million visitors annually. This sector contributes to 20% of its GDP. With 308 kilometers of ski slopes, which account for 5% of its territory, Andorra's Granvalira Resorts, the largest ski area in southern Europe, is one of the world's top 13 ski resorts.

The giant Granvalira Area includes Ordino Arcalís, Pal Arinsal, and Grandvalira resorts. Last year, the Andorra's resorts generated 2.4 million ski days. Andorra is also known for its 1500 shops, open 361 days a year, and 30 museums. The principality is the best-endowed country in the world per m2, second only to the Vatican. The resorts attract many international travelers, mainly from Spain, France, and the UK, with 53%, 17%, and 15%, respectively. Additionally, it attracts skiers from Latin America and the United States, with 20,000 American skiing lovers expected this season.

Grandvalira Resorts has signed agreements with new ski areas, including Les 2Alpes, Alpe d'Huez, and Mammoth Mountain in California, to attract international and affluent clientele. Additionally, the resort has integrated the Ikon Pass. With the help of a single pass, skiers can access the ski areas of fifty world-renowned winter destinations across Canada, Asia, Oceania, and the United States. Andorra has also modeled its resorts on those in North America.

A €140 million growth plan

Grandvalira Resorts has increased its investment budget to €34.5 million this season, double what it was in 2022-2023. This represents half of the total investments in the country, and will be allocated to three areas. Grandvalira and Pal Arinsal will receive new chairlifts, and the Iconia sports performance center will be constructed at 2500 meters above sea level. These are some of the most significant projects planned for this season.

In terms of the environment, Grandvalira Resorts heavily relies on self-produced energy. The mini-hydropower plant inaugurated in 2016 provides 25-100% of Ordino Arcalís' energy, while Grandvalira's self-produced energy accounts for only 6% of consumption.

The French Pyrenees ski resorts are worried about their future due to climate change and their reliance on skiing. However, Andorra is still investing in skiing. Grandvalira Resorts has revealed a plan to invest €140 million in expansion over the next few years in addition to the budget for maintaining and improving the ski areas.

Andorra's resorts are known for hosting international sporting events throughout the year. In January, they will host the Mountain Skiing World Cup, the Women's Alpine Skiing World Cup in February, and the Flying Kilometre World Cup (speed skiing) in March. Additionally, Andorra has qualified to compete in the 2029 Alpine World Ski Championships against resorts from Val Gardena, Italy, and Narvik, Norway.

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